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as I am of the White House and much though I have appreciated these years in it, there isn't any place in the world like home—like Sagamore Hill, where things are our own, with our own associations, and where it is real country" (p. 165). These letters discuss in a charming manner affairs of state, hunting trips, books and their authors, and public men of the period. "From the youngest to the eldest," as Mr. Bishop states, "he wrote to them always as his equals" (p. 4).

J. A. JAMES

*The correspondence of Nicholas Biddle.* Dealing with national affairs, 1807-1844. Edited by Reginald C. McGrane, Ph.D. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin company, 1919. 365 p. \$6.00)

In typography and binding this sumptuous volume bears out the best traditions of the Riverside press. Its introduction, notes, index, and scholarly apparatus are in harmony with its excellent format. As a worthy memento of an important public character, it reflects the activity of a bygone era and the just pride felt in the achievements of an honored American family. The publishers, the family representatives, and the editor have combined to produce a work worthy of the reputation and services of its title-bearer.

The name of Nicholas Biddle once stood high in national councils, although as president of the second United States bank it was linked with an unpopular institution. With Hamilton and Gallatin, Biddle forms the great financial triumvirate of our first half-century of national history. Like his two great compeers, he favored centralized control in national finance, and the immediate success that attended their system was its best justification. Unfortunately, under our government fiscal affairs cannot be separated from politics and Biddle, like Hamilton and Gallatin, was in a measure sacrificed to partisan clamor. Yet all three made their influence felt in behalf of sound finance and, despite the temporary divorce of national treasury from the ordinary business world, their principles have largely shaped our subsequent fiscal policy.

Nearly a score of years ago the late Professor Catterall made extensive use of the Biddle papers in his volume on *The second United States bank*, to which the present work will serve as useful check. This fact alone would justify Mr. McGrane's task, but Biddle was more than a mere financial magnate and it is fitting to recognize, as in the present work, his many-sided activities. He graduated from Princeton as class leader in 1801, at the early age of fifteen. Three years later he became secretary of the American legation at Paris, where he had a chance to connect his name with the closing transactions of the Louisiana purchase. Returning from Paris in 1807, the year he attained his majority, he en-

tered upon the practice of law and also engaged in literary work and served two terms in the state legislature. His most important production of this period was an edition of the journals of Lewis and Clark, which fittingly connected his name with the Mississippi valley. In 1819 his friend Monroe appointed him director of the second United States bank and three years later he became its president. Aided by sound judgment, broad vision, and wide experience, his administration of the bank was eminently successful, but the institution did not thereby escape the enmity of the politicians who surrounded Jackson. Thus the bank and its president became victims of the "spoils system" that vitiated the usefulness of most governmental agencies of the period. Into the merits of this controversy that arose over the bank we need not now enter. Repudiated as a national institution, it continued for some years under a Pennsylvania charter. Biddle retired from its management in 1839, but not before interested friends had urged him for high national offices, including the presidency. He refused to seek public favor, although until his death, in 1844, he retained an active interest in all public affairs, especially in the fortunes of his intimate friend Webster. His intimacy with Clay and peculiar relation to the Harrison campaign give his correspondence a western flavor.

The letters of a man of Biddle's opportunities and character could not fail to be interesting. Moreover, he numbered among his regular correspondents such political leaders as Clay, Calhoun, Webster, Monroe, Tyler, and a host of others scarcely less notable than they. The public is fairly familiar with their lives and public services and their important letters and state papers are reasonably accessible in well-known editions. The task of making accessible the writings of those equally deserving whom fate placed in less conspicuous positions now constitutes an important field of historical activity, and this constitutes the great value of the present work. Biddle's intimacy with Clay and his peculiar relation to the Harrison campaign also give the book some value as western source material.

Mr. McGrane has wisely let the letters tell their own story and they appear as near the original as print will permit. His pages are not overloaded with notes but editorial comments are numerous enough to bring about necessary connections with the best authorities or to place the facts in proper perspective, and he has made his results accessible by means of a thorough index of names.

It is no easy task to handle three hundred letters, virtually constituting a card catalogue of the notables of our first half century, without making some grievous slips; but Mr. McGrane shows such painstaking care and sound scholarship that these are few indeed. There are some

points where his judgment of the editorial function would differ from the reviewer's. For example: "them" (l. 3, p. 53) is obviously intended for "than"; "right" (l. 4, p. 109) for "regret"; "molesse" (l. 1, p. 84), for "malice"; "standets" (l. 22, p. 189), for "star sets"; "projectives" (l. 15, p. 219), for "projectors"; "Lead" (l. 15, p. 227), for "head"; "were" (l. 29, p. 228), for "mere"; and "exprints" (l. 12, p. 281), for "exprmts" (experiments). The reviewer does not doubt that the editor copied these mistakes faithfully from the originals but he would have protected himself by inserting the obvious word in brackets. The same may be said of such misspellings as "weilded" (l. 2, p. 255), "banditte" (l. 3, *ibid.*), and "releive" (l. 17, p. 290), and the omission of "me" (l. 27, p. 280) and of "the" (l. 20, p. 351).

The footnotes show a few minor mistakes: "representative" (n. 4, p. 121), should be "senator," and "Ohio" (n. 2, p. 183), "Michigan"; "placed" (n. 1, p. 3) is ambiguous; "May 3" (n. 2, p. 72) should, it seems, be "May 8" (cf. p. 99). On page 105 in the sixth line from the end of the note there is evidently an omission, and the note as a whole is not as clear as it should be. The pronoun is lacking (n. 2, p. 264) and the wrong preposition employed (p. 269 and 296).

These slips are so trivial that it seems useless to mention them were it not probable that they will be noted elsewhere. They in no way detract from the usefulness of the book, and simply show that the editor, while a thorough scholar, is human. Let us hope that his work will stimulate others, particularly in the Mississippi valley, to undertake the editing of similar correspondence, and encourage the family representatives, as in this case, to give the task substantial support.

*Political leaders of provincial Pennsylvania.* By Isaac Sharpless, president of Haverford college, 1887-1917. (New York: Macmillan company, 1919. 248 p. \$2.50)

In a series of eight brief but carefully executed biographies, Mr. Sharpless has given us an excellent account of the early leaders of Pennsylvania. The long strife between Penn and the settlers, the Quaker ideas on civil and religious liberty, treatment of the Indians, penal and hospital systems, and party politics of provincial Pennsylvania are clearly set forth in these biographies. To the general reader these sketches are interesting on account of the prominence and personality of the men discussed; while for the student of history, they help explain many obscure incidents in Pennsylvania politics.

Of the eight men described—William Penn, Thomas Lloyd, David Lloyd, James Logan, John Kinsey, Isaac Norris, James Pemberton, and Thomas Dickinson—the first four belong to the early period (1682-1726);